

United States Department of Agriculture  
Extension Service  
Office of Cooperative Extension Work

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1933 NATIONAL 4-H MUSIC ACHIEVEMENT TEST  
"The World's Great Composers"

Ninth Phase - October 7, 1933  
Verdi, Johann Strauss, Jr., and Liszt

Descriptive notes prepared and broadcast by  
R. A. Turner, field agent, Office of Cooperative Extension Work, United States Department of Agriculture, to interpret the group of musical compositions played by the United States Marine Band during the National 4-H Club Radio Program of October 7, 1933.

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How do you do, 4-H club folks!

I am happy to return to the microphone this month and help you to enjoy another of the musical periods in our National 4-H Club Radio Programs. While out in the Middle West, I had the fun of listening to last month's broadcast, and so had the chance to again learn just how these 4-H radio programs sound to you who listen to them each month.

Today we add the last three names to our list of "The World's Great Composers" whose lives and works we are studying in this year's series of musical broadcasts. Those names are Verdi, Johann Strauss, Jr., and Liszt. This group completes the total of 27 composers whose works we have listed under our central theme for the year - "The World's Great Composers."

Verdi

"Anvil Chorus" from Il Trovatore

The first of two compositions by the great Italian composer Verdi, which we hear today, is The Anvil Chorus, from the opera Il Trovatore.

Verdi, who lived from 1813 to 1901, wrote some of the world's best-known operas. Among these are Il Trovatore, La Traviata, Rigoletto, Aida, Otello, and Falstaff, which was his last opera.

Our first selection "The Anvil Chorus" is taken from Il Trovatore. This opera was first presented in Rome in 1853. Although for a time Verdi produced a new opera almost every year, it is probable that none of his operas ever became more popular the world over than did this one.

The story of the opera is based on border warfare in Spain during the fifteenth century. The Anvil Chorus depicts a scene in a gypsy camp in the hills in the Province of Biscay in Spain. It is early morning and the men begin their work, singing as they go. Soon they begin to accent their singing by pounding on the anvils; the bass on the strong beats and the tenor on the weak ones.

Listen attentively as the United States Marine Band, Capt. Taylor Branson conducting, plays "The Anvil Chorus" from the opera Il Trovatore by Verdi.

#### "Quartette" from Rigoletto

The second composition by Verdi in today's program is the "Quartette" from the opera Rigoletto. The presentation of this opera in 1851 established Verdi as the greatest Italian master of his day.

Four of the characters in Rigoletto sing their different emotions in the Quartette which is one of the best-known bits of music in this opera. The setting is as follows: Gilda, the daughter of Rigoletto the hunchback court clown, is in love with the duke. The duke, who is inside an inn, is talking to Maddalena, a young gypsy woman. Gilda and her father, who threatens vengeance upon the treacherous duke, are watching them from the outside. The music is characterized by brilliant accomplishments, and the dramatic climax, capped with a high "A" for the soprano, will win your admiration. This number ranks with the Sextette from Lucia as one of the most masterful vocal ensembles ever written.

This quartette, from the opera Rigoletto by Verdi is played for us now by the United States Marine Band.

Strauss

#### The Beautiful Blue Danube

The next selection is one which all of you will recognize at once. It is the waltz entitled "The Beautiful Blue Danube", by Strauss.

Johann Strauss was born in Vienna, and was the son of another Johann Strauss, also a composer. Perhaps we remember Strauss best because of his composition The Beautiful Blue Danube. This popular waltz, by the famous "waltz king", was originally produced as a male chorus and was a failure, but as rewritten and played by the Strauss orchestra it was received with wild enthusiasm. We are told that Strauss first conceived the idea for this waltz while attending a concert. He jotted down the little theme on his stiff white cuff. The incident was forgotten, and had it not been for the observation of his wife, the allur-



ing waltz theme would have been lost. The composition is in reality a series of waltzes, after the old-time Hungarian custom of combining many short, contrasting movements of similar style and rhythm. Theodore Thomas, of Chicago, introduced the Blue Danube Waltz to America a few months after Strauss had played it for the first time in Vienna, and it at once became the popular waltz of the entire world.

I am sure that you will be delighted now to hear the United States Marine Band play The Beautiful Blue Danube by Strauss.

Liszt

### Liebestraum

Our next two selections are by the composer Liszt. The first of these is the ever-popular "Liebestraum."

Liszt, of Hungarian parentage, received his first piano lessons from his father. His further training was had in Vienna and Paris. Later he made his home in Weimar, where he produced many of the great works by other composers. Liszt wrote no operas. Perhaps his best-known works are his rhapsodies, oratorios, symphonies, and symphonic poems. He is often remembered for his striking personality, his generosity, and his remarkable teaching ability. Liebestraum, meaning dream of love, is a tone poem which has sometimes been referred to as a "song without words." Many 4-H club members will be reminded of their own 4-H club song entitled "Dreaming" as they listen to the United States Marine Band play Liebestraum by Liszt.

Before we hear our next number, may I call your attention to two items. The first is that we shall not have our usual musical period in next month's National 4-H Club Radio Program on Saturday, November 4, since that is the date for the annual National 4-H Radio Achievement Program, about which Mr. Salisbury will tell you more later in this broadcast. The second item is that during the National 4-H Radio Program on Saturday, December 2, we shall bring to a formal ending this year's study of "The World's Great Composers" by holding our annual identification test. The United States Marine Band will play a certain number of compositions selected from those which we have studied during the year, and you will have an opportunity to see how many of them you can identify.

### Second Hungarian Rhapsody

Now we are ready for our last number on today's program. It is the Second Hungarian Rhapsody by Liszt. This composition is possibly the best known of the 15 Hungarian rhapsodies written by this composer. In these compositions, Liszt has combined characteristic folk themes with the peculiar music of the gypsies to give us a glimpse of Hungarian life.

Listen for the contrasting slow and rapid movements of the gypsy dance as the United States Marine Band, Capt. Taylor Branson conducting, closes our musical period by playing the Second Hungarian Rhapsody, by Liszt.

